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Tenth anniversary of the Society of Family Planning

[Philip Darney](#) (SFP President 2005–2007), [Mitchell D. Creinin](#) (SFP President 2007–2009), [Mark Nichols](#) (SFP President 2009–2011), [Melissa Gilliam](#) (SFP President 2011–2013), [Carolyn L. Westhoff](#) (SFP President 2013–2015)

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 Abstract | **Full Text**

This issue of the journal celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Society of Family Planning (SFP). The society has grown from 18 Founding members and 33 Charter members (all named below) at its founding in 2005 to 591 members in 2015. How did we get here?

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...ing belief of two endocrinology leaders, Leon Speroff and Dan Mishell, was that the clinical science ...n did not receive adequate attention by either the Society for Gynecologic (now Reproductive) Investigation or the American Society of Reproductive Medicine; this concern prompted a letter from Dr. Speroff to Uta Landy, the National Director of the Fellowship in Family Planning, and Philip Darney, the founder of the first fellowship at the University of California, San Francisco, encouraging the establishment of a new subspecialty society. Further, in 2001, Leon Speroff encouraged Mitchell Creinin, Anita Nelson and Carolyn Westhoff to consider how to form an academic society related to family planning. The ensuing launch of SFP resulted from the commitment and vision of the Fellowship in Family Planning and the Fellowship Directors. This group first explored creating a liaison with existing organizations but concluded by 2002 that we needed to create a separate, interdisciplinary society. Such a society could give graduated fellows an opportunity to pursue their research interests in abortion, for which there was scant funding available, and contraception, funding for which was dwindling from both private and public sources. Several fellowship directors volunteered to start working on forming the new society; members of the initial working committee were Mitch Creinin, Philip Darney, Melissa Gilliam, Jack Sciarra and Carolyn Westhoff.

A very brief history follows: In 2002, the Family Planning Fellowship officially endorsed moving forward with a new society that could become a home for the growing number of Fellowship graduates, and the Fellowship Directors agreed to serve as the founding members. Dr. Mitchell Creinin drew up the first blueprints for the society in 2003. The Fellowship Directors and additional volunteers (in particular, Drs. Phil Darney, Teresa Depineres, Eleanor Drey, Michelle Fox, Melissa Gilliam, Bryna Harwood, Roxanne Jamshidi, John Jain, Laura Maclsaac, Dan Mishell, Antonia Nicosia, Deb Nucatola, Jodi Steinauer, Mimi Ziemann and Nikki Zite) worked to refine the plans for the new society, and Dr. Sharon Hillier, then President of the Infectious Disease Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology, provided guidance. In 2004, the Fellowship Directors adopted the first by-laws of the society and approved the first Board of Directors — that first board included Phil Darney as president, Mitchell Creinin as President-elect, Carolyn Westhoff as Secretary and Jack Sciarra as Treasurer. Additional members of the initial Board of Directors included Paul Blumenthal, Melissa Gilliam, Marji Gold, Allan Rosenfield, Lee Shulman and Mimi Ziemann. The new Society had a logo and officers, but not consistent funding or any staff. Because of its genesis in the Fellowship, Uta Landy volunteered the manager of the fellowship at the National Office of the Fellowship in Family Planning to be the initial SFP administrator, who would design and maintain the SFP Web site (www.societyfp.org), solicit memberships and communicate with members about dues and meetings.

The election of Jack Sciarra as the treasurer was critical to the successful beginning of SFP — Jack solicited generous initial donations from all of the founding and charter members; this early funding allowed Jack to open the first SFP bank account, incorporate the society on January 14, 2005, and obtain 501c3 status for the new society by June of 2005. This work and his guidance on all matters were essential to move the infant SFP forward. The founders' contributions got SFP started, but more support was needed. Some founders, led by Allan

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Rosenfield, did not want support to come from the pharmaceutical industry. Allan was able to arrange a generous contribution to SFP from the Packard Foundation, which further funded the account Jack had started. Dr. Robert Miller's evaluation of the Fellowship in Family Planning recommended establishing competitive postfellowship research funding. Subsequent funding obtained for research and for SFP administrative support ensued, making it possible to hire Pat Anderson as the first full-time SFP administrator with office space at San Francisco General Hospital. Pat created SFP's first research review panels and a funding system. After funding for research became available, SFP membership grew rapidly. In September 2005, SFP held its first annual meeting as a concurrent meeting with the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals (ARHP) and the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) National Medical Committee. SFP remains grateful to Wayne Shields, the ARHP Executive Director, for welcoming and hosting SFP during its first years. Also, in 2005, *Contraception* became the official journal of the society. Obviously, 2005 was an amazing year.

In 2008, SFP moved into its own headquarters in Philadelphia, and Susan Higginbotham became the Executive Director, a role in which she continues today, surpassing all our expectations as a champion for the growth and effectiveness of the society. Susan leads a small staff, including Marlo Polonsky, Sarom Sot and Lauren Bruce, who do extraordinary work for SFP and its members. While the initial momentum for society membership came primarily from the Fellowship in Family Planning graduates, SFP has realized its initial vision of becoming an interdisciplinary organization with a growing number of fellows among social scientists and other specialties. The relationship of SFP with the Fellowship remains close as the Fellowship funds membership and attendance at the Society's annual meeting (the North American Forum on Family Planning) for current fellows, SFP and the Fellowship share research priorities, and SFP funds the research of graduated fellows; thus, together, SFP and the Fellowship promote academic advancement and leadership in the field of family planning.

Admission to full Fellowship in SFP requires academic productivity as evidenced by relevant peer-reviewed publications and presentation of research at the annual meeting. The Society's mission is to advance science in family planning, including contraception and abortion, by funding research and promoting the expansion and dissemination of family planning knowledge. SFP also seeks to cultivate a collaborative and supportive environment to foster scholarly activity and leadership in the areas of reproductive health and family planning. While competitive research funding began early, in 2011, the Board created the SFP Research Fund as the organization that focuses solely on grant making. The research mission is central to SFP, and thanks to generous donations, SFP awarded nearly \$3 million in its recent, ninth research funding cycle earlier this year, with substantial additional funding awarded for Fellowship research and new research initiatives. In this issue of the journal, we list publications that have resulted from past SFP-funded research to give readers an idea of the scope of this work, and the SFP Web site includes more information about recent grant awards. The initial SFP grant program included a few small (less than \$15,000) and large (up to \$120,000) grants; the program today includes more of these individual awards plus multisite projects, mentorship support, pilot awards and junior investigator awards, and SFP manages the research grants program for the current Fellows in Family Planning. This year, SFP has further expanded the grants program and provided its very first awards in community-based participatory research and also new interdisciplinary innovation grants. In an article in this issue, Susan Higginbotham describes the formal process undertaken in 2014 to define research priorities to guide the SFP grant-making process.

SFP fosters the dissemination of family planning knowledge through clinical guidelines published periodically in this journal and publically available on its Web site, and through its annual meeting. SFP has published 15 evidence-based clinical guidelines in the past decade, all of which are available in *Contraception* by open access. Notably, the recent guidelines on medical abortion were created as joint guidelines and joint publications with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

The Society's annual meeting grew apace with the organization itself, and in 2011, SFP co-founded the new North American Forum on Family Planning annual meeting in partnership with the PPFA National Medical Committee. The Forum is now seeking ways to partner again with ARHP and will welcome ARHP and its members to the 2015 meeting. In this issue of the journal, you will find a record-breaking number of abstracts to be presented in November at the Forum. Beyond the grants program and the Forum, a treasured activity of SFP is awarding achievement in this field with three awards: (a) the Lifetime Achievement Award, (b) the Allen Rosenfield Award for contributions focusing on international family planning and (3) for mentorship, the Robert Hatcher Award; we list past awardees below.

In summary, since 2005, SFP has grown from a few dedicated individuals into a robust organization that includes among its fellows individuals from many clinical specialties and academic disciplines. Much gratitude to the founders and to the many individuals who continue to donate so many hours as board members, as committee members and as hardworking grant reviewers (an acknowledgement of current grant reviewers appears in the August issue of *Contraception*). Our great gratitude also goes to all the donors, large and small, who continue to make the work possible. At this anniversary, we are all amazed at and proud of the great progress of SFP's first decade. We are delighted to be a part of this organization; SFP fellows are all committed to academic pursuits in family planning to improve the health and the health care of our patients. Congratulations to all SFP members and SFP staff for achieving these many accomplishments.

Founding and Charter members of SFP

Founding members

Paul Blumenthal	Daniel Mishell, Jr.
Lynn Borgatta	Mark Nichols
Mitchell Creinin	Eric Schaff
Philip Darney	Allan Rosenfield
Melissa Gilliam	John Sciarra
Marji Gold	Lee Shulman
Cassing Hammond	Phil Stubblefield
Bryna Harwood	Carolyn Westhoff
John Jain	Mimi Ziemann

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Charter members

Abbey Berenson	E. Steve Lichtenberg
Miriam Cremer	Laura MacIsaac
Anne Davis	Trent MacKay
Eleanor Drey	Catherine Maternowska
Alison Edelman	Karen Meckstroth
Eve Espey	Leslie Miller
Larry Finer	Amita Murthy
Gwen Gentile	Tony Ogburn
Alisa Goldberg	Maureen Paul
David Grimes	Jeff Peipert
Jeff Jensen	Joe Speidel
Deborah Kacanek	Michael Thomas
Andrew Kaunitz	James Trussell
Lisa Keder	Livia Wan
Radha Lewis	Nikki Zite

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Society of Family Planning Lifetime Achievement Award, established in 2005 to recognize scholarship over the majority of a career promoting the advancement of clinical or social science within family planning

2015: Stanley K. Henshaw, Ph.D.

2014: Horacio Croxatto, M.D.

2013: Carole Joffe, Ph.D.

2012: Anna Glasier, M.D.

2011: Philip Darney, MD, M.Sc.

2010: Carolyn L. Westhoff, M.D., M.Sc.

2009: Jacqui (Jacqueline) Darroch, Ph.D.

2008: Sheldon Segal, Ph.D.

2007: Daniel R. Mishell, Jr., M.D.

2006 Leon Speroff, M.D.

2005: David Grimes, M.D.

Allan Rosenfield Award for Lifetime Contributions to International Family Planning, established in 2007 to pay homage to the exceptional research, authority and dedication of the award's first recipient, SFP founding board member Dr. Allan Rosenfield.

2015: Willard Cates, Jr., M.D., M.P.H.

2014: John J. Sciarra, M.D., Ph.D.

2013: Paul Blumenthal, M.D., M.P.H.

2012: Rebecca Gomperts, M.D., M.P.P.

2011: Aníbal Faúndes, M.D., Ph.D.

2010: Herbert B. Peterson, M.D.

2009: J. Joseph Speidel, M.D., M.P.H.

2008: Paul Van Look, M.D., Ph.D.

2007: Allan Rosenfield, M.D.

Robert A. Hatcher Family Planning Mentor Award, established in 2013 in recognition of the extraordinary role in educating and mentoring family planning health providers played by the award's first recipient, Dr. Robert A. Hatcher.

2015: Mark D. Nichols, M.D.

2014: Marji Gold, M.D.

2013: Robert A. Hatcher, M.D., M.P.H.

Society of Family Planning, current and past members of the Board of Directors

Danielle Bessett, 2013–present

Paul Blumenthal, 2005–2007

Sonya Borrero, 2013–present

Mitchell D. Creinin, 2005–2011

Carrie Cwiak, 2011–present

Philip D. Darney, 2005–2010

Eve Espey, 2008–present

Lawrence Finer, 2008–2014

Melissa Gilliam, 2005–2015

Marji Gold, 2005–2011

Bryna Harwood, 2008–2013

Susan Higginbotham, ex-officio, 2008–present

David Hubacher, 2014–present

Michelle Isley, 2010–2014

Anu Kumar, 2014–present

Tessa Madden, 2008–2015

Mark Nichols, 2008–2013

Maureen Paul, 2012–present

Tina Raine-Bennett, 2014–present

Allan Rosenfield, 2005–2008

John J. Sciarra, 2005–2011

Lee P. Shulman, 2005–2008

Stephanie Teal, 2009–present

James Trussell, 2007–2015

Tracy Weitz, 2011–2013

Carolyn L. Westhoff, 2005–2008, 2011–present

Beverly Winikoff, 2009–2014

Miriam Ziemann, 2005–2008

Nikki Zite, 2007–2015

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